



Information bulletin of the
**World Decade for
Cultural Development
(1988-1997)**

Culture Plus



Culture Plus
No. 10, 1993
'Culture, Education and Work'
the 1993 Decade theme

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

- World Commission
on Culture and Development 2

CULTURE, EDUCATION AND WORK

- Some thoughts on culture, education
and work
Mervyn Claxton 4
Women through the ages
Birgitta Leander 6

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S YEAR

- 1993 - International Year for
the World's Indigenous People 11

WORLD DAY FOR CULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT

- World Day celebrations
on all continents 12

DECADE FLAGSHIPS

- The Silk Roads 13

THE DECADE IN THE WORLD

- Native education in Canada 17
Birth traditions 18

INFORMATION

- Book news: Biohistory 19

Culture Plus, an information bulletin on the World Decade for Cultural Development, is now published twice a year in English and French. The Decade, which was proclaimed by the United Nations for the period from 1988 to 1997, with UNESCO as a lead agency, is a joint endeavour of the whole United Nations family of organizations. This bulletin, published by UNESCO, is not an official document of this or any other UN agency. It is distributed free of charge. The reproduction of articles is welcome.

Editor: Birgitta Leander

Editorial consultant: Barbara Thompson

Artistic conception and lay-out:

Susanne Almeida-Klein

English revisers: Barbara Thompson
Malachy Quinn

For more information about the World Decade for Cultural Development, write to its Secretariat at UNESCO, 1, rue Miollis, 75732 Paris Cedex 15.

World Commission on Culture and Development

In line with the United Nations report, *Our Common Future*, written by Mrs Gro Harlem Brundtland, of Norway, who chaired the World Commission for Environment and Development in 1987, the 26th General Conference of UNESCO asked the Organization, in co-operation with the United Nations, to set up a World Commission on Culture and Development in 1992.

The Commission would be expected to hold hearings over three years and to prepare a report on how cultural considerations might better be taken into account in the worldwide process of social and economic development. It would be an independent body and would begin its work when and if sufficient extra-budgetary resources were pledged. Norway announced a pledge of 500,000 US dollars towards the estimated 6,000,000 US dollars cost and several other countries followed suit.

The resolution, urging 'longer-term rethinking of development goals and strategies', to quote Ingrid Eide, who is the Norwegian member of the Executive Board, was submitted by 28 Member States in all.

Under its terms, the World Commission would assist those who implement development programmes, both within the United Nations system and at multi-lateral banks. The accent would be laid on the cultural dimension, with a view to identifying and analysing the ways in which cultural development, over and above economic conditions, influences individual and collective well-being. The Commission would also study the implications of the present progressive loss of indigenous knowledge, traditions, languages and even entire cultures.

'We were inspired by the Brundtland report', Mrs Eide explained in an interview, pointing out that the environment was now on political priorities agendas around the world. 'More humility on behalf of the industrial world is in order', she

went on to say. 'We know that our development can neither be duplicated nor sustained.'

'If you want to raise a new awareness, to create an interest in alternatives, you have to have some sort of global re-thinking.'

A special account has been opened at UNESCO to accept further contributions.

The President of the World Commission is the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr Javier Pérez de Cuellar (Peru).

After consulting the present Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr Boutros Boutros Gali, and the Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Federico Mayor, the President announced the composition of the World Commission in December 1992. The following twelve personalities have been chosen as its permanent members:

Mr Claude Ake, a development economist, Director of the Centre for Advanced Social Sciences of the University of Port Harcourt (Nigeria);

Ms Lourdes Arizpe, a Mexican anthropologist, President of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, Director of the Institute of Anthropology of the University of Mexico;

Mr Yoro K. Fall, a historian specializing in African history and the relations between culture and development, Professor and Head of the Department of History in Dakar, Inspector General of National Education (Senegal);

EDITORIAL

Mr Kurt Furgler, both a lawyer and an economist, specializing in international relations, Vice-President of the Club of Rome, former President of the Helvetic Confederation and former member of the Swiss Government (Federal Council);

Mr Celso Furtado, an economist and former Minister of Planning as well as former Minister of Culture of Brazil, Honorary Professor of Development Economy at the Sorbonne;

Ms Niki Goulondris, Vice-President of the Goulondris Museum, a specialist in ecology and cultural questions, former Secretary of State for Social Services in Greece, Honorary Vice-President of Greek radio and television;

Mr Mahbub ul Haq, an economist, Special Adviser to the Administrator of the UNDP, in charge of the publication of the World Report on Human Development, former Minister of Finance, of Planning and Development, of Trade and Economic Affairs of Pakistan;

Mr Ole Henrik Magga, a linguist, President of the Saami (Lapp) Parliament of Norway, an expert in Lapp culture, former Professor of Finno-Ugrian languages at the University of Oslo;

Mr Nikita Mikhalkov, a film-maker, Golden Lion at the Venice Festival in 1991, Cultural Adviser to the Vice-President of the Russian Federation;

Ms Tchie Nakane, a Japanese anthropologist, specializing in Oriental cultures, Vice-President of the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, Director of the Shibusawa Foundation of Ethnological Studies;

Ms Leila Takla, a lawyer and member of the Supreme Council of Culture in Egypt, the Supreme Council of Universities and of the National Academy of Science and Technology, University Professor, expert in socio-cultural and environmental questions as well as in questions related to the condition of women, former President of the Committee of Foreign Affairs of the Egyptian Parliament;

Mr Elie Wiesel, awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1986, American novelist and short story writer of Rumanian origin, Professor of Human Sciences at the University of Boston, member of the Honorary Committee of the League against Racism and Anti-Semitism.

Besides the above permanent members of the World Commission, certain eminent personalities have also been nominated as honorary members, whom the President may call upon at times in order to benefit from their exceptional expertise and wisdom. These honorary members are so far the following:



Ms Aung San Suu Kyi, Honorary Member of the Commission

H.R.H. Prince Talal Ibn Abdul Aziz al Saoud, President of AGFUND, former Minister of Economy and Finance and former Minister of Communications of Saudi Arabia;

Ms Aung San Suu Kyi, awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991, the 1991 Sakharov Prize for the Freedom of Mind, the International Simón Bolívar Prize of UNESCO in 1992, founder of the National League for Democracy in Myanmar;

Mr Claude Lévi-Strauss, French anthropologist and writer, member of the French Academy, Honorary Professor at the Collège de France;

Mr Ilya Prigogine, awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1977, a scientist and philosopher, member of the Royal Academy of Belgium;

Mr Derek Walcott, awarded the Nobel Prize winner for Literature in 1992, a Caribbean poet and dramatist from St. Lucia, Professor of English Literature at the University of Boston.

With the designation of these distinguished personalities, the World Commission for Culture and Development is thus ready to start its work on the preparation of a World Report on the subject, in co-operation with its Executive Secretary, Mr Jérôme Bindé, of the UNESCO Secretariat and with the assistance of an internal UNESCO Task Force headed by the Director of the Bureau for Studies, Programming and Evaluation, Mr Albert Sasson.



Mr Javier Pérez de Cuellar, President of the Commission



Out of school education in Pyongyang, Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Some thoughts on culture, education and work

A triple relationship

The relationship between education and work is really one of relevance – what type of education is best for the development of society as a whole and of the economy in particular? The answer to that question, which would vary from society to society, and would facilitate the establishment of a dynamic relationship between education and work, is one that would not only train people to satisfy the needs of the economy but, to the extent that it promotes the development of creative potential and innovative capacity, would create new job opportunities as well as new types of job opportunities. Accelerating technological progress, for example, leads to a rapid obsolescence of skills, which underlines the importance of technological adaptability. The mere training of people for existing job opportunities would therefore not be enough. It

is only the development of creative potential and innovative capacity which will allow a society to meet the changing demands brought about by technological progress.

The cultural factor in this equation can be summed up with one question – what are those cultural practices and attitudes which act as an obstacle to the establishment of this dynamic relationship, and what are those which can, and do, facilitate such a relationship? The answer to this would also vary from society to society. There is, therefore, no single model that can be used to tackle this problem.

Simon Kuznets, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1971, stated: 'Ninety per cent of development in the past in the industrialized countries was due not to additions to capital, but to improvements in man's capacities: skill,

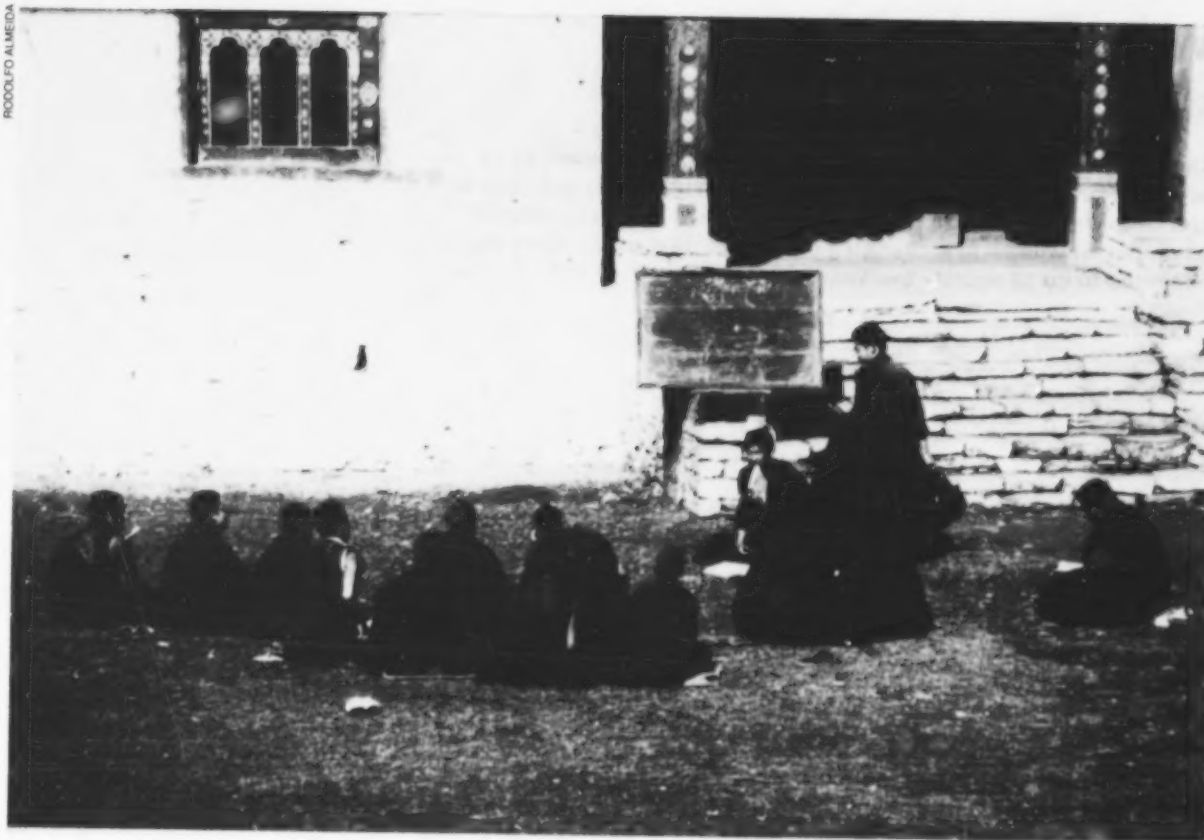
know-how, management, etc. Man's capacities, not capital, are the number one multiplying factor in the process of development. They are the main conditions for a more efficient use of resources.'

The main question, therefore, is what we can do to help to change cultural attitudes (in developing countries) so that the human factor may become the central one in any development policy.

There is a circular cause and effect relationship between education and culture. Education transmits cultural values, but since cultural models are instilled in individuals through education, culture is, in a sense, an effect of education. Education is not, therefore, a mere neutral mechanism for cultural transmission, but a powerful agent for cultural change.

How do we utilize education for cultural change in order to bring about the

RODOLFO ALMEIDA



Buddhist Academy in Bhutan

conditions which should favour the establishment of this dynamic relationship between education and work?

Education by example is always more persuasive than education by precept. The example of Japan and certain countries in South-East Asia is instructive in this respect. The experience of these countries has shown the important role played by education, not only in a general sense but also as regards content, in their successful development. In Korea, for example, recent statistics show that approximately 50 per cent of students in tertiary education pursue courses in scientific and technological subjects.

Because of the importance given to education by the Confucian system of values and also by deliberate government policy, education became the most important factor in social mobility. This,

therefore, greatly influenced the transformation of societies based on status (which characterize most developing societies, making them static rather than dynamic) to ones based on merit.

A meritocratic society implies the choosing of people for jobs in that society on the basis of their competence. This was not only the stated policy of Japan, as of certain South-East Asian countries, but even more important, it was the applied policy. Most developing countries have yet to discover the value of that principle.

It was an effort of political will by Japan, both in the early seventh century when it was faced with the threat of China, and in the late nineteenth century when the threat came from the West, that enabled it radically to change practices, attitudes and policies so as to face those challenges successfully.

Similarly, it is only an effort of political will that can change the ingrained attitudes of most developing countries and enable them to establish a dynamic relationship between education and work. Even when the best education policies are devised and effectively applied, which by itself would be a formidable achievement, if appointments in developing countries continue to be made on the basis of kinship, clanship and friendship there will be gross economic underperformance accompanied by a massive brain drain.

The key question to be answered, therefore, is to know how we are to sell this approach at decision-making levels in developing countries.

MERVYN CLAXTON

Women through the ages

Education and work in different cultural contexts

The author explores the reasons for the enduring subordination of women, from primitive societies where all were equal by the laws of nature to the present era where man is in control, and relates the education of women in a changing cultural setting to the work she is expected to do as society evolves.

From primitive society to the present

What was the situation of women in primitive societies? In hunting-and-gathering cultures during the most remote period of human social organizations, there was a fairly high degree of equality. There were neither social classes nor the accumulation of wealth, nor groups that dominated other groups. The limited resources were shared by all and allocated by a system based on age and physiological needs, but not on social hierarchy. Consequently, there was no aggression by one sex against the other. Men and women functioned in different spheres according to their biological abilities and the limits imposed by nature. The greater physical strength of men made them more suitable for hunting large animals in the forests and on the plains, while pregnancy and child-bearing obliged women to limit themselves to shorter excursions to collect fruit, seeds and roots, or to trap smaller animals near the home. The larger excursions of men and the life close to home led by women also determined the fact that food preparation was generally done by women.

The role of women changed with the transition to a settled life in the period of tribal societies and with the beginning of agriculture. Because woman had been the collector of seeds, she was the inventor of the system of planting those seeds near home, to avoid the trouble of having to move around; in other words, it was she who introduced the cultivation of certain plants, which permitted a sedentary existence. One must assume that the growing importance of agriculture compared with the decline of hunting reinforced woman's position. If one adds to this the modified significance of territori-

ality, that is, the emergence of the notion of property based on the need to protect and guarantee the harvest of what had been planted in the new cultivated patches, then one can understand that woman's role acquired a certain importance. This was sometimes translated into rules whereby a couple was settled in the woman's territory – 'matrilocal'; or systems whereby lineage was traced down through the woman's line – 'matrilinearity'; but this was not always the case. Nor was it inevitably translated into a need for choosing women to head the tribes, since in the majority of cases tribal or clan chiefs seem to have been men.

What can have been the reason for this? Why was it that in this early period, women were relegated to a second-rate position so far as authority was concerned, even when they played the principal role in production and in land/property relationships? Some researchers into the situation of women throughout the ages, like Rosaldo and Lamphère, claim that true matriarchies – societies in which women appear to have had supreme authority in all aspects of life – have never existed. They attribute this to the fact that the biological limits imposed by maternity, pregnancy, childbirth and, above all, by lactation were too critical in periods in which no modern science existed, to liberate women from some of the obligations which they share with female animals. However, if we observe some contemporary communities where agriculture is predominantly carried out by women, for example in some African countries, we see that, although it is true that the chiefs are usually men, the position of women is considerably stronger than in neighbouring societies, where agriculture is in the hands of the men of the

group. This makes one think that the historical period passed through by many peoples, corresponding to the beginning of agriculture in women's hands, was also probably a period in which women enjoyed more recognition and prestige because of their vital role in relation to the means of production.

Another turning-point in the relationship between men and women in the historical development of world cultures seems to have been the transition from slash-and-burn agriculture to intensive farming with irrigation and, especially with the help of such animals as the horse and ox, for pulling and carrying. This generally coincided with the appearance of the state and with a semi-urban or urban way of life, made possible by the intensification of the means of production of food and the concentration of populations in specific areas, together with a more rigid structuring of society into social classes. The role of man changed as a result of his connection with these crucial factors in the new forms of production, i.e. with domesticated animals, and with the new technology of intensive farming such as animal-drawn ploughs and carts for carrying the harvest. Woman-based agriculture was converted into 'male agriculture'.

With male domination over the apparatus of food production, together with the restructuring of society and the appearance of dominated and dominant social classes, women's initially biological limitations were converted into social barriers. Now that woman had lost her position of predominance over an important area of her community's life, namely agriculture, and now that there had been a growth in man's power to make decisions – which already existed in other areas as a result of increased hierarchi-



Training centre for farming families in Cameroon. Women crushing ground nuts on the traditional mill

cal structuring — an era of almost total subjugation began for woman. It is interesting to note that in some of the areas where the use of the horse as a domestic animal and the use of cartwheels were first introduced, i.e. in the Middle East, a very high degree of subordination of woman to man still exists. In other parts of the world, as well, where agriculture is predominantly male, the reclusion and submission of women seems to be a distinctive feature even today.

The beginning of the era of industrialization and technological development should theoretically have liberated women, inasmuch as material progress diminishes the dependency of human beings on their biological imperatives. But the weight of history and tradition does not cease to be felt despite the change in objective conditions, just as in the case of those races which, through the vicissitudes of history, have fallen into subjugation by conquest or by the practice of slavery. They later find that

the memory of those times and the disadvantages produced by the situation itself lingers on for centuries, even after the disappearance of the circumstances which produced that historical situation. So it happens with women in the modern world. Today there are all kinds of substitutes for mother's milk, nurseries and schools for both sexes; on the other hand, we can eliminate all lingering doubts about any congenital or constitutional intellectual inferiority of women with respect to men, as modern science proves. But in spite of this, women continue to carry the burdensome legacy of historical backwardness, produced at the dawn of time.

Women and work in modern society

Seen from another standpoint, technological and economic development appear to go hand in hand with a declining quality of emotion and communication in

life. The close social living, mutual aid and communication, which exist in traditional rural society, tend to disappear gradually with economic development and growing industrialization, to be replaced in modern society by alienation, solitude, compartmentalization and the breaking up of family ties. In this process the role of woman changes more slowly than the rest of the ingredients of social restructuring.

While in most traditional societies of the recent past, woman may have played an inferior role to man's, but in any case different from his, her personal self-fulfilment was realized through her foreordained activity as mother of a family and administrator of domestic chores. She was in permanent communication with others and surrounded by the whole range of varied feelings or emotions of the members of her family and close relatives or friends. In the modern world, the role of women is no longer self-evident, even for those who choose to stay



Village woman fetching the family water supply at the communal tap (Egypt)

at home and take care of the family. The entire setting has changed. The home itself, especially in an industrialized urban environment, is no longer, for the major part of the day, a place where human communication takes place between beings whose activities converge in the home. In general, it is a place which during working hours is deserted by the father of the family or by both parents, who go out to earn a living, and also by the children, especially when they reach school age.

So what is the situation of woman outside the home, for instance in the general labour market? The figures show that the majority enter the labour market and work in unequal conditions with regard to those of men and generally receive inferior pay and status. They are relegated to certain types of work which require less training and offer fewer possibilities for professional satisfaction. In the hierarchical pyramid they usually occupy the lower positions, and there are very few women who manage to rise to positions

of importance in the professional world, which is still dominated by men. And even if a woman manages to surmount the innumerable barriers placed before her professional career, the problems of looking after her children and the home - not to mention the important question of emotional fulfilment through family life - usually raise further impediments in her professional life.

In the face of all this, many women, even in industrialized societies, choose the alternative of being housewives and go back to creating for themselves a traditional role in a non-traditional world. Although this may offer moments of great personal satisfaction, the gradual daytime abandonment of the home by the growing children, and the regular absence of the husband for economic reasons during the same part of the day, are factors that contribute to a feeling of solitude and lack of communication in the woman who stays at home.

If, on top of this, the situation of being a housewife is involuntary because of a

lack of nursery schools or baby-sitters, or due to redundancy or unemployment, the problem becomes even more acute. Especially if the woman has been trained professionally with a view to a possible career, and practical circumstances oblige her to stay at home, the frustration felt can lead to much imbalance and tension within the family. But, even for a woman who has consciously opted for the role of housewife, there exists a fundamental dilemma, because a moment will come when her cares become irrelevant or at least are often felt to be so by the woman herself. This usually happens in the so-called 'second age' of woman, i.e. around forty, when her children have grown up and left home and her role as a mother and housewife is reduced and she suddenly finds herself of little use at home after going around with the vacuum-cleaner or sewing on her husband's buttons. At that stage usually it is too late for her to start a career or find some meaningful activity that could fill the emptiness of her days.

This is the moment that brings great crises for many 'privileged' women in the wealthy countries. The above phenomenon represents the failure of the attempt to recreate, in a modern society, a role for woman which is more appropriate to yesterday's world. The tragedy of woman in modern society lies in the fact that she has been unable to replace that traditional role by another which would offer the same satisfactions but in a different world.

But the problems of the majority of the women of the world are at the other extreme: they are those of poor women in poor countries. In addition to the problems these women share with all human beings in the poor world – undernourishment, sickness, lack of resources, illiteracy, etc. – they also have to face the problems specific to women. Because of their status as second-class citizens, it is women who usually account for the highest figures of illiteracy and lack of material and other resources on international statistical charts. Women generally bear the heaviest burden of marginalization and exploitation by society as a whole. Moreover, they also often suffer oppression and exploitation by men. The specific problems of women in certain cultural contexts – strict forms which limit their possibilities of social, intellectual or emotional fulfilment – are added to the general problems of underdevelopment. Very often they find themselves occupying the lowest levels of society in general, and they often lack the knowledge and consciousness to struggle for their own liberation. Or, as is typical of a social group which is exploited and discriminated against, whether for ethnic, economic or sexual reasons, they discriminate against themselves and consequently consider that the discrimination imposed upon them is justified and lose interest in the struggle to free themselves from it.

Housewives and working women

Now, if the mass of subjugated and exploited women in the world were to be made aware of their own situation and were motivated to initiate the struggle for their liberation, what would the path towards that liberation be? What would its ultimate goal be? Would they repeat the same mistakes that women in the industrialized countries have made? The fact is that when we look at the results achieved in many countries, where it is supposed that women's emancipation is

fairly advanced, the general picture is not very encouraging. In these countries, we often witness how one type of oppression has been substituted for another. A subordinate, but in its context meaningful role has been replaced by another type of subordination or by a lack of functions. What appears to be emancipation is, in reality, slavery of another type. This may, for the housewife in her 'second age' in a modern metropolis, amount to oppression by alienation and solitude, or, in the case of working or professional women, a struggle to make their way forward in a world dominated by men; it may mean the replacement of oppression at home by oppression in the labour market: a path which begins in separate worlds and ends in a common pyramid, the lower levels of which are reserved for

*Just as the oppression of
one sex cannot be the
basis for the liberation of
the other, the enslavement
of one class can
never be the
pre-condition for the
fulfilment of the other.*

women. And on the way, the woman's sacrifice has very often had to be made by loosening the ties with her children and forgoing the satisfaction of an intense and full family life.

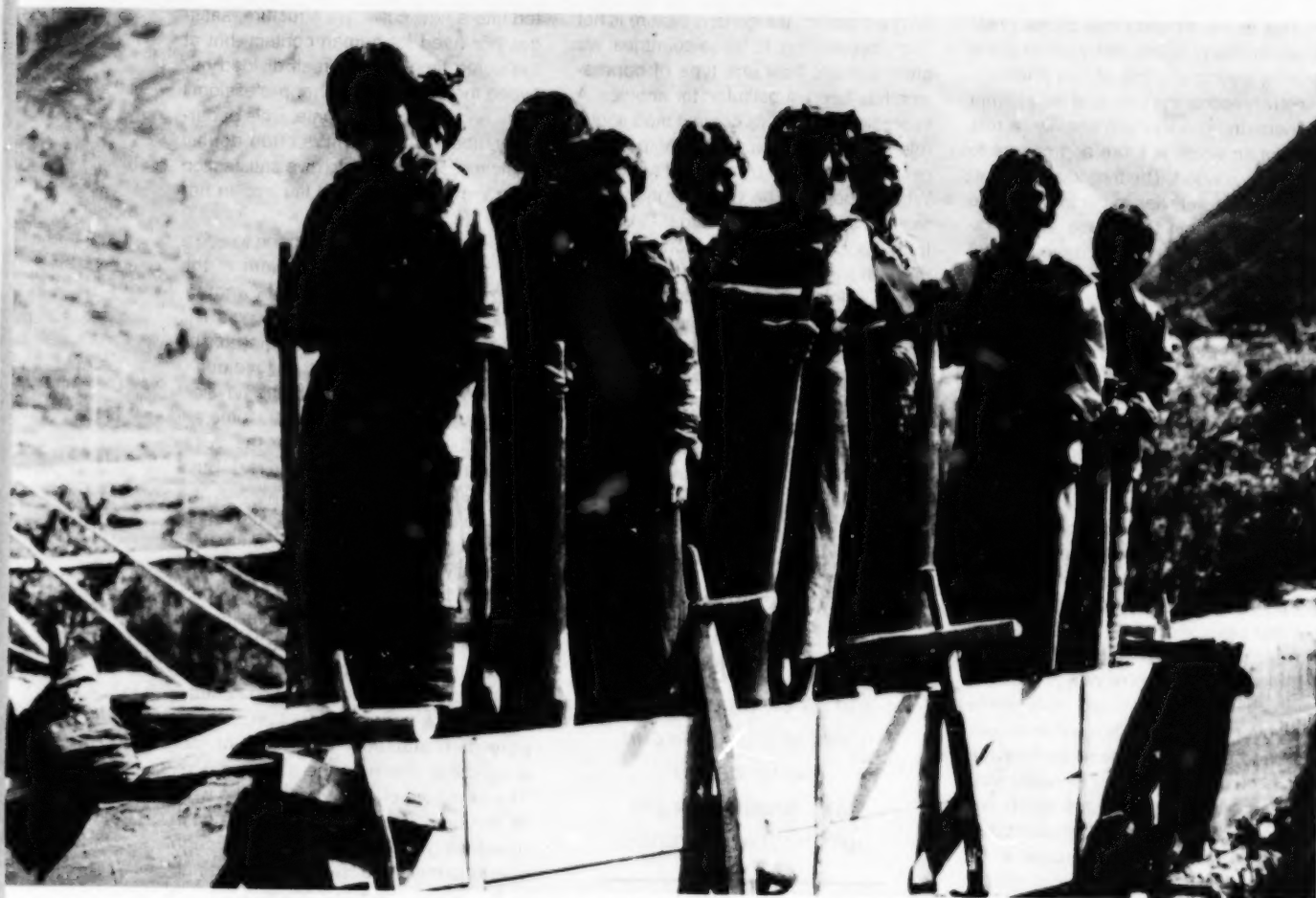
This vision is not the product of nostalgia for the past. It reflects the anxieties produced by abandoning perhaps unsatisfactory but at least organic and internally coherent traditional forms of life for new life-styles that have still not found an internal coherence and are not necessarily more satisfactory. Thus, the 'togetherness' of the traditional rural family, within which woman had her allotted place, has not in general been replaced in modern society by new forms of collective social living, which could offer her the necessary contact with other adults. What togetherness is there to find in the aseptic and lifeless suburbs, where the housewife spends her day between a depersonalized supermarket and a kitchen inhabited by machines that say nothing? On the other hand, the woman working outside the home, on finding herself slot-

ted into a new collective structure, satisfies her need for human contact, but at the same time finds herself divided between the obligations of her professional work and her work at home. This apparently 'liberated' woman is often doubly enslaved, as she tries to give satisfaction both in her professional life and in her family life.

It is at this point that we need to add a new dimension to this problem of the submission/emancipation of women, namely the dimension of social class. It is obvious that a woman belonging to the least privileged class in a developing country is more tied up with the physical struggle for survival than most women in a rich country, if we consider the question of the comforts at her disposal. But if we consider an upper-class woman in a rich country and compare her with an upper-class woman in a poor country, it is very likely that the situation is the opposite: that the woman from the poor country will have a more comfortable life with more opportunities to devote herself to her own interests, and perhaps even have a professional career. The contrast is, of course, even greater when we compare her situation with that of her lower-class sisters in the same country. The existence of poor women, who work as servants, cooks, nurse-maids, etc., in developing countries, sadly enough seems to make the life of the rich woman in the same country easier and more agreeable. On the other hand, in a technologically more developed country with fewer class differences, the non-existence of this type of domestic female help often makes the life of the middle- or upper-class woman harder.

Consequently, the possibilities of having a professional career sometimes seem greater for women in a poor country, because of the situation of their poor sisters, than for professional women in a rich country. This may be one explanation of why the figures for female participation in the diplomatic corps or delegations in Africa, Asia and Latin America in international bodies are sometimes higher than those of Europe and the United States. In other words, is the cruel truth really that, in a period of transition like the present, the greater enslavement of one portion of the women in a country should be the price paid for the liberation of the other portion?

Of course not. No real liberation can ever be achieved at the expense of someone else. Just as the oppression of one sex cannot be the basis for the lib-



Women of Bhutan building a house, using the traditional rammed earth construction technique

eration of the other, the enslavement of one class can never be the pre-condition for the fulfilment of the other. It would be as wrong as building the prosperity of some countries on the exploitation of others.

It is not in fact at all clear, however, that the path to women's liberation must be the one now being trodden in many countries, apparently leading from the traditional situation of woman as mother and housewife to the condition of the independent professional woman who hands over the care of her children to social institutions or services. It may be that there is no universally acceptable system, but that each people will have to find its own way of advancing towards a more dignified and more satisfactory future for its women.

Why a cultural analysis?

It may be, too, that the liberation of woman may never be effective without

the simultaneous achievement of the liberation of man: liberation from a life removed from the affection and the touching experiences of seeing his children growing up, liberation from being the only economic support and the undisputed head of the family, liberation from exaggerated careerism and the violence it involves, liberation from the need to find dialogue and companionship outside the home. These are some of the things that feminists (men and women) in the industrialized countries have begun to demand. To this must be added liberation from the injustice and social inequalities which, in many parts of the world, oppress all human beings, women as well as men.

In any case, in this sphere as in others, the path of development must be the one discovered by each people as appropriate to its own needs, i.e. its endogenous development. The experiences of other peoples must serve as an example to be analysed in an effort to avoid all

their mistakes so as to absorb only what is valuable within one's own cultural context.

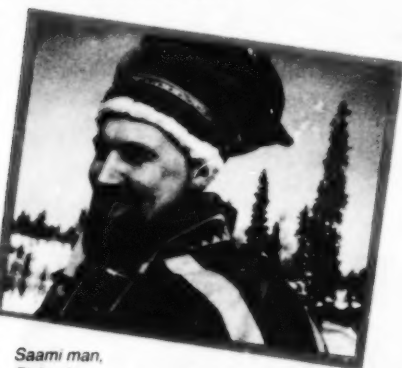
Without this prior analysis, repeating the same mistakes can lead to even more serious consequences, as we have seen in the case of other aspects of modern development. Urbanization and industrialization, for example, without taking into account the destructive effects on the physical environment, such as atmospheric and water pollution, and the destruction of flora and fauna, are dimensions of modern development that could perhaps be avoided by those countries which still hope to initiate the process of technological modernization. In another context, women's liberation may follow a different path, one that avoids present alternatives, of having to choose between alienation caused by the solitude of the housewife in large cities and alienation due to the burden of a double professional/domestic life.

BIRGITTA LEANDER

1993 – International Year for the World's Indigenous People

Launched by the United Nations General Assembly in New York on Human Rights Day, 10 December 1992, it 'will provide an opportunity to focus the attention of the international community on one of the planet's most neglected and vulnerable groups of people'.

The Year's theme – 'Indigenous people: a new partnership' – will encourage the development of new relationships between States and indigenous people and between the international community and indigenous people.



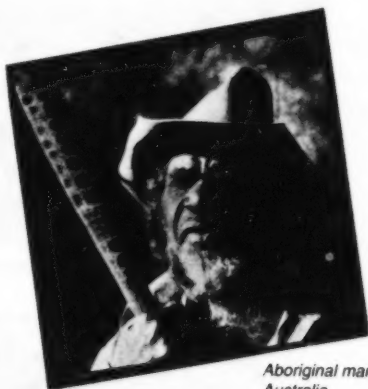
Saami man,
Finland

Erica-Irene A. Daes, Chairperson/Rapporteur of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, explained, 'Indigenous people have told us that their human rights are part of a total quest for

regions and patterns of social and economic organization. An estimated 300 million indigenous people live in more than 70 countries, from the Arctic region to the Amazon and Australia.

A generation ago, many indigenous people were not entitled to vote. Today they are increasingly visible partners in the struggle to protect the global environment and promote sustainable development and resource use.

In conjunction with the ILO and other United Nations agencies and offices, the Centre for Human Rights in Geneva will ensure the co-ordination for the Year.



Aboriginal man,
Australia

At the national level, States were urged to include measures that would:

- Encourage participation of indigenous people in the preparation and implementation of all activities undertaken in connection with the Year; and
- Encourage indigenous organizations and communities to prepare their own programmes and activities.

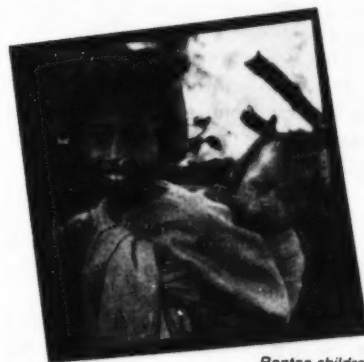
At the international level, the General Assembly likewise recommended that the United Nations systems should:

- Fund concrete projects for indigenous communities, reflecting the wishes of indigenous people, that can be of direct benefit to them;



Karen child,
Thailand

- Provide technical assistance to Governments wishing to make provisions in their legislation for protecting and promoting the human rights of indigenous people, in particular on questions of land, environmental protection and strengthening cultural identity, and provide technical and financial assistance for implementing such legislation.



Bontoc children,
Philippines



Navajo man,
United States of
America

well-being. We do not want the International Year to be a lot of empty words; we want there to be real advances'.

Indigenous people are descendants of the original inhabitants of many lands, strikingly diverse in their cultures, reli-

For further information, contact: International Year for the World's Indigenous People, Centre for Human Rights, United Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland.

World Day celebrations on all continents

More than twenty countries celebrated the World Day for Cultural Development on 21 May 1992.

1992 was the first year when the newly instituted World Day for Cultural Development was celebrated. The theme was 'Culture and Environment'. UNESCO received reports from over twenty countries on all continents of the globe about how this first World Day had been celebrated. We hope that even more countries will follow their examples in 1993, when the Decade theme for the year is 'Culture, Education and Work'.

A series of activities, related to the annual theme 'Culture and Environment', took place in the following countries :

Africa

(Kenya, Mauritius)

Latin America and the Caribbean

(Argentina, Belize, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Guyana, Paraguay)

Asia and the Pacific

(Indonesia, Laos, the Maldives, Nepal, the Philippines)

Europe

(Canada, France [at Headquarters], Norway, the Netherlands, Rumania)

Arab Countries

(Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Kuwait).

For example: in Indonesia, Laos and the Netherlands, different symposia and a round table were organized on 'Culture and Environment'.

Also, some exhibitions on the annual theme were shown among others in Cuba, Egypt and Nepal. 'Art against Apartheid' was the theme of an exhibition in Canada.

Radio and TV programmes were broadcast in Belize, Guyana and Kuwait.

Shows around dance and theatre were organized by some countries, like the Philippines and Laos.

Meetings were organized in schools in the Maldives and Chile within the framework of the Plan of Associated Schools.

Finally, a concert was given by the String Orchestra 'Jeunes de l'Ile-de-France' at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. It was opened by an address from UNESCO's Director-General.



World Day celebrations in Capivary, Paraguay

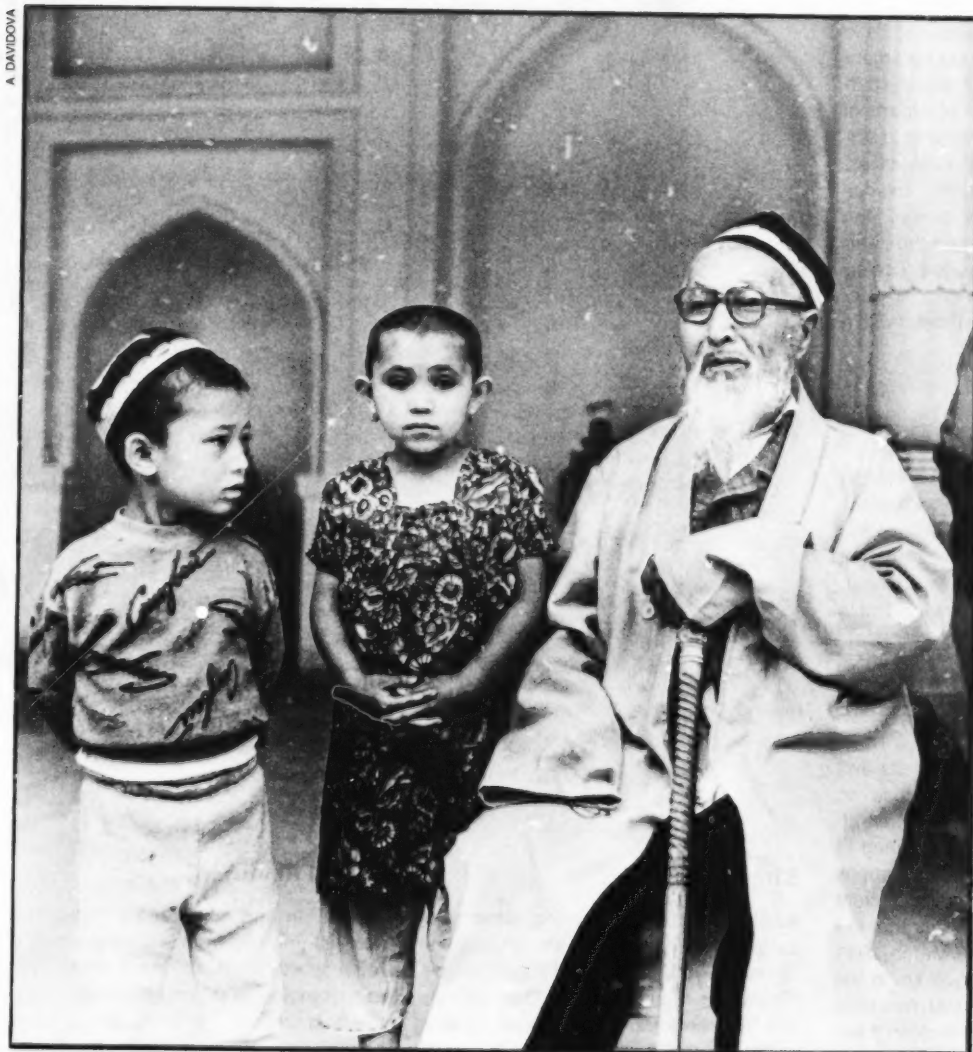


Practice of the Decade message 'Culture and Environment'

The Silk Roads

An outstanding project

Since time immemorial the civilizations of East and Central Asia and of the Mediterranean Basin have maintained contact with one another. Goods, knowledge and ideas were passed from one group of merchants to another until they reached their final destination. Today the best-known of all the trading routes opened up in ancient times by travellers, whether merchants, monks, pilgrims, artists or even soldiers, which led to the widening of contacts between East and West, are the ones Westerners have symbolically called the 'Silk Roads' since the nineteenth century. And indeed, of all the goods carried along these roads, the most sought-after and precious in those far-off days was silk from China.



Children in Uzbekistan listen to oral traditions recounted by an elder (Steppe Route)

UNESCO's project entitled 'Integral Study of the Silk Roads: Roads of Dialogue', launched in 1988 to mark the occasion of the proclamation of the World Decade for Cultural Development, retraces some of these ancient roads and examines the different types of exchange which were then current in order to mobilize the scientific and academic community all over the world, stimulate research in the disciplines concerned and, basically, renew intercultural dialogue. At the same time, the cultural identity of the many different populations encountered along the Silk Roads will be highlighted, so that the individual cultural heritage of each one may be better known and understood. The activities of this extra-budgetary project are being financed by funds from sponsors outside the Organization. It will reach completion in 1997 at the close of Decade.

The Project's innovatory concept is to promote intercultural dialogue by organizing expeditions in the field, with the participation of a large number of experts of many different nationalities and disciplines, as well as media representatives. In addition to visits to the historic and cultural sites along the Silk Roads, the expeditions comprise one or more international seminars as well as daily conferences and discussions on specific subjects, thereby providing the Project with a vital scientific basis.

Desert Route

For historical reasons, UNESCO's first expedition, the Desert Route, took place in China from 20 July to 23 August 1990 and linked Xian, the capital of ancient China for eleven dynasties, to Kashgar, an oasis and commercial turning-point in the extreme west of Xinjiang.

Maritime Route

An international team of scientists and media representatives left Venice on 23 October on board the *Fulk-al-Salamah*, the ship graciously loaned to UNESCO by His Majesty, Sultan Qaboos of Oman, in order to follow the ancient sea routes to Osaka. So it was that the team reached Japan on 3 March 1991 following a journey of 27,500 km in the course of which it called at nineteen other ports, took part in seventeen international seminars and meetings, and held 182 conferences on board.

Steppe Route

Another land route bearing witness to very ancient commercial and spiritual influences, the Central Asian Steppe Route was the subject of a third expedition from Ashkhabad to Alma-Ata by way of five Central Asian Republics between 18 April and 18 June 1991.

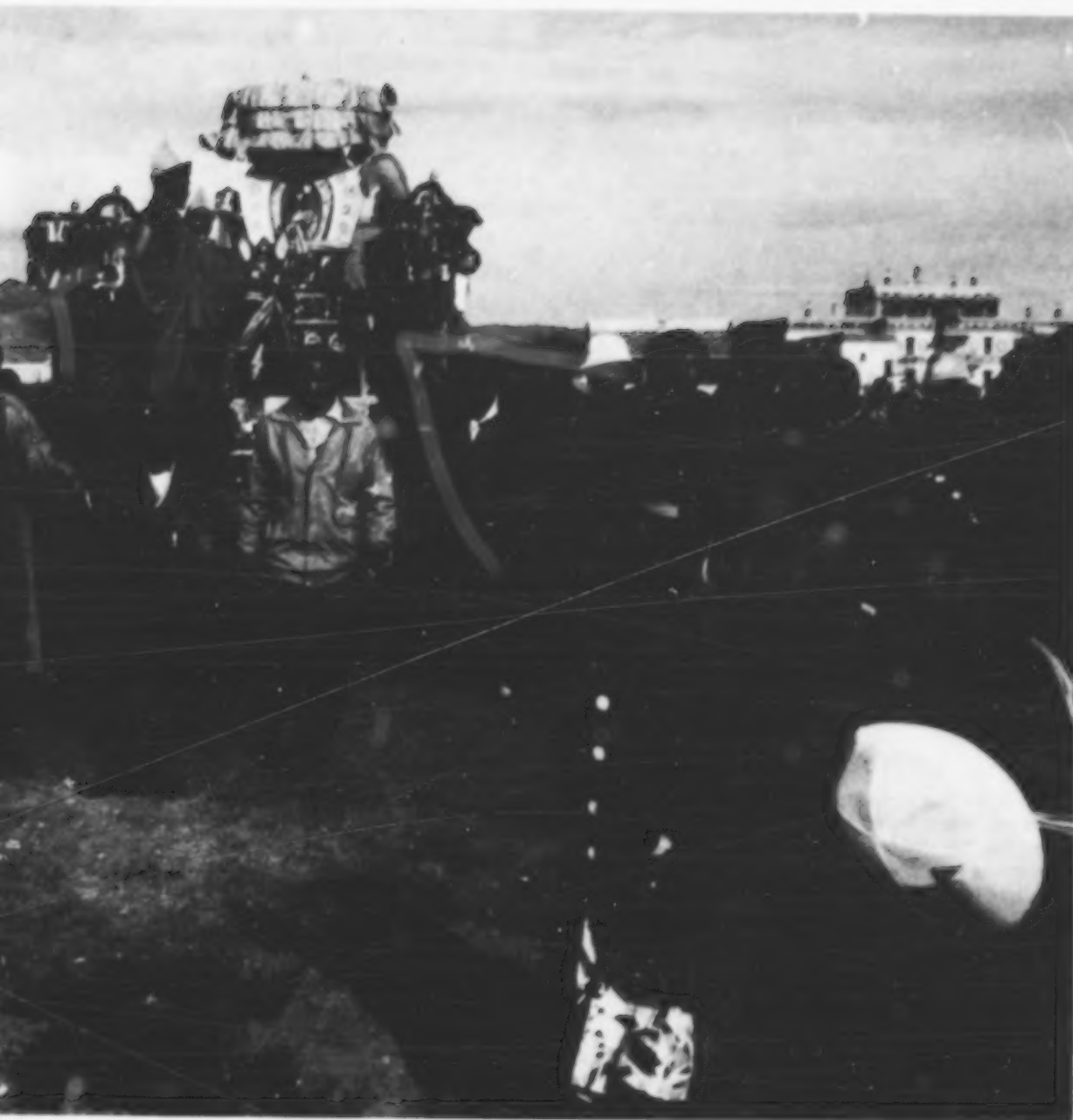
Nomad Route

The fourth and most recent expedition has just returned from Mongolia where it retraced the ancient Nomad Route over approximately 3000 km of desert, mountain and steppe. The international team comprised forty-three foreign experts in addition to Mongolian scientists and

TORY MOLENAAR



Procession



Monk at the Buddhist Monastery of Erdenezuu, Harhorin, Mongolia (Nomad Route)

twenty-five media representatives. Scholars regard these expeditions as a unique opportunity to discover sites, meet researchers and improve their knowledge through direct experience in areas that are often difficult of access. The exchanges with local experts which took place far from the rigid structure of international meetings, and in an everyday

context in the field, led to a most fertile dialogue.

The scientific material collected on these expeditions, which is essential for maintaining the dialogue that has commenced, is now being examined. Some twenty-eight publications arising out of the project, including reports of seminars and illustrated works of general interest,

are already on sale. News programmes and documentary films have been broadcast in the countries concerned, as have a large number of radio productions, eleven of them in France.

In order to maintain scientific interest in the study of the Silk Roads following these four expeditions, and to strengthen international co-operation through the



Rounding up horses in Undur Sant, Mongolia (Nomad Route)

network of Silk Roads experts now being formed, the Project is co-ordinating, with a specialist, five international research programmes on subjects of particular significance to most of the countries concerned by the Integral Study. The programmes cover: petroglyphs (corpus and study of the petroglyphs of Central Asia); languages (study of linguistic types of communication used along the Silk Roads); epics (comparative studies along maritime routes); study and preservation of caravanserais and the postal system; study of archaeological sites and the paleo-environment through remote detection.

A fellowship programme relating to the Silk Roads Project has been established through the generosity of the internationally known Japanese painter, Ikko Hirayama, in order to encourage and assist young researchers.

Some of the most important activities of the Silk Roads Project include the study of the cultural heritage. So it is that the Silk Roads Festival, to commence in Paris in 1993, will feature in particular a magnificent open-air pageant in spring 1994 illustrating the arts and traditions of the peoples of the Silk Roads. It will take place on the water and on the bridges

along the Seine, from the Île de la Cité to the Invalides. A similar open-air event will be organized subsequently in the various Silk Roads countries, i.e. in two or three countries each year until 1997. These shows will be staged for the Silk Roads Project by a private company specializing in this type of artistic work. The Festival will also organize exhibitions of exceptional interest in museums in Paris, the Grand Palais, the Musée de l'Homme and the Musée Guimet as well as in museums in the other countries concerned.

In 1992, the Silk Roads Project also focused on the follow-up to the first three expeditions conducted in 1990-1991 and, more specifically, on the scientific evaluation and dissemination of their findings. Thus, the papers presented at the twenty-three international seminars held to date have been submitted for evaluation to the members of the Advisory Committee and the National Committees for the Project.

Several publications appeared at the end of 1991: **Venice**, Travel Literature or the Travels of Literature; **Athens**, Commercial and Cultural Exchanges between the Orient and the Greek World; **Kyongju**, Korean Culture and the Silk

Roads. Six other works prepared as part of the project have also been published. UNESCO is producing a series of video clips on the expeditions. National television companies whose teams worked on the Steppe Route, such as Asahi TV (Japan), MBC (Republic of Korea) and CCTV (China), have produced and distributed films for their respective audiences.

Another effect of the Project has been to strengthen the networks of participating specialists and scientific institutions. A Maritime Silk Routes Studies Centre has been set up in **China**. With the assistance of several Member States, an International Institute of Central Asia is to be established. The Institute of Silk Roads Studies, founded at **Kamakura** in Japan by the Japanese artist, Ikko Hirayama, will also be part of the Project network. The Secretariat is undertaking the necessary preparatory work in order to assist in the establishment in **Sri Lanka** of a Buddhist Research Information Centre and the creation of an international computerized network. To date, thirty Hirayama Fellowships have been awarded to young scholars from eighteen countries to enable them to pursue their research abroad in disciplines linked to the study of the Silk Roads.

Native education in Canada

This project has shown the value of calling upon local cultural potential to achieve greater enjoyment in the classroom and improved social and educational results.

The Kw'atindee Bino Community Teacher Education Programme is a joint pilot project of the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education, Arctic College and the Department of Education of the Government of the Northwest Territories (N.W.T.). In September 1990 UNESCO recognized the project as an official activity of the World Decade for Cultural Development in Canada. This programme, which is taking place at the Elizabeth Mackenzie School in the Dogrib (Dene) Community of Rae-Edzo, Northwest Territories, is considered by the school and the community to be a success.

Viewed as an alternative model of teacher education, the Project is designed to train local native paraprofessionals who presently work in northern schools in support posts as well as other individuals who are interested in becoming teachers but are unable to leave their home community. Participant interns work in and learn through a cooperative delivery of the school programme to children in the Chief Jimmy Bruneau School in Edzo, N.W.T., a sister community ten kilometres from Edzo.

The venture is intended to be as much a process as a programme, where participants co-operatively explore and identify the knowledge, skills and methods that are suitable for educating the children of their community. Both the approach and the methods of the Kw'atindee Bino Community Teacher Education Programme are based upon

belief in the primary importance of the cultural dimension of schooling. The school builds on the educational experiences of the individual, the family and the community, in and beyond the classroom. Educational activity should recognize and respect the cultural background, language and learning styles of each student as well as the valuable learning experiences available to students in the community and the wider environment.

The Programme consists of coursework undertaken over a period of two years in three major content areas. In the area of Culture and Learning, interns study the importance of being rooted in the culture of the society they serve, to ensure the relevance, integrity and balance of their work with children. The course content within the area of Community and School Partnership allows teachers to understand health and social issues affecting the lives of their students. Interns learn effective strategies to bridge the existing barriers between school and the home. They are trained to be able to perform an advocacy role, to deal with the dysfunctional realities of many families, and accept the responsibility to mobilize available resources and generate new ones as needed, in the children's education. Through the course content of Curriculum and Children, interns become knowledgeable about current research and the understanding of how children learn, and what they need to know to participate successfully within the community and wider society, and of

how schools operate to achieve these goals.

The two-year pilot project, ending in June 1992, has been effective in bringing about many changes in the school where it was offered. The interns have learned to teach well within a culture-based programme that integrates their unique cultural background. They have learned to become sensitive to the needs of the children and to be supportive in their role as teachers.

Improved attendance and better student behaviour are two of the most outwardly noticeable changes as a direct result of the interns' work in the school. Children are learning well and are aided by the interns' consistent use of their own language as well as English in classroom instruction. As a result, the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education has developed a Bilingual Education Programme for all students within its jurisdiction who are utilizing their language in classroom instruction. A further success is the support parents have shown in the programme.

In June 1991, four interns who already had previous teacher training coursework graduated and began working at the school. Another six interns graduated in June 1992. Of these, three interns have accepted teaching posts in the school and posts for the remaining three are pending. Due to the success of the current programme, the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education is beginning a new programme in Lac LaMartre, a nearby Dogrib community.

Birth traditions

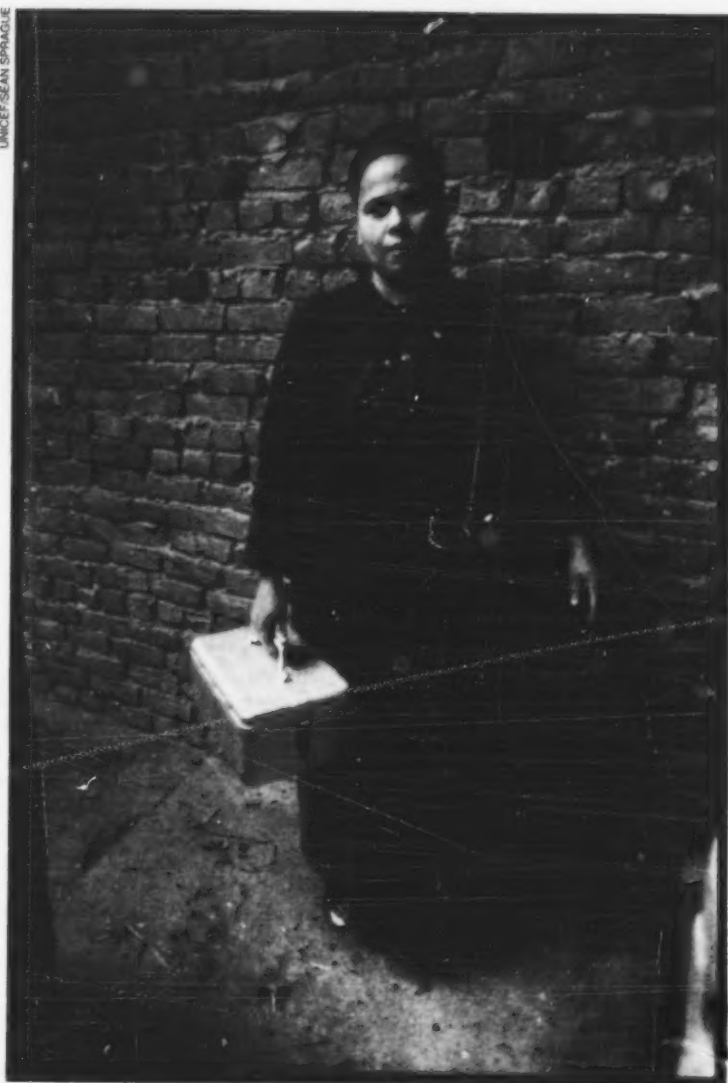
Within the framework of the World Decade for Cultural Development, UNESCO launched an ambitious programme on the theme 'The Phases of Life' (pregnancy and birth, childhood and adolescence, maturity, marriage, work and leisure, old age and death) with activities in different parts of the world. This very vast programme for the collection and dissemination of oral traditions, dance, music, rites and also inter-regional and intercontinental exchanges, with a view to furthering mutual knowledge among peoples, has had its offshoots. One of these is the Birth Traditions Survival Bank.

Birth Traditions Survival Bank is the title of a project currently being set up by Dr Jacky Vincent Priya in Malawi, Central Africa. It was while talking to midwives in various parts of South-East Asia that Dr Vincent first thought of collecting information from all over the world about traditions associated with conception, pregnancy, birth and the neonatal period. After a further period in Yemen, she concluded that, at a time when many women in the West felt that 'modern' medical practice had its shortcomings, ancient skills and knowledge were being discredited and not passed on.

Dr Vincent has worked, studied, taught and carried out research in the United Kingdom and has published two books: *Birth without Doctors*, based on her experiences in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand; and *Birth Traditions and Modern Obstetrics*, written in Yemen. In Malawi, Dr Vincent is delighted with the many opportunities offered for further research into traditional methods and feels that it is an excellent place for her project.

The Birth Traditions Survival Bank will consist of a database gleaned from a variety of sources, even travellers' tales, as such knowledge is almost never recorded intentionally, but only by accident. Consequently, Dr Vincent would welcome information from anybody with personal experience of these matters.

UNICEF/SEAN SPRAGUE



An Egyptian traditional midwife, *daya*, carrying the medical kit she received with her diploma

A quarterly newsletter will be issued and subscriptions will be used to help to support the bank. There will also be a photograph and picture library, and ongoing empirical research will be an important feature. At present Dr Priya's own research material provides the substance of the available data.

One of the ultimate aims is to combat the disenchantment and reinstate and reintegrate traditional practices in an overall health care system for mothers and children.

For further information and the quarterly newsletter, write to: Birth Traditions Survival Bank, Private Bag 2, Mtunthama, Malawi, Central Africa. Fax: 253.586.

* * *

It may be interesting to compare Dr Vincent Priya's initiative with recent efforts made in Egypt with the support of UNICEF, to associate traditional midwives, *dayas*, in a pilot experiment. Instead of dismissing their work, the authorities encourage the *dayas* to attend a short course, usually lasting about ten days, in the rudiments of formal practice. On leaving they obtain a diploma and are provided with a basic medical kit, which replaces the scissors, or knife, and the onion to wake the baby of old. Henceforth, the *dayas* enjoy a new status and are able to apply their traditional skills and administer their usual post-natal assistance to the family within a more knowledgeable framework.

Book-news

Biohistory

How man and the biosphere interact

The emergence of human activities such as hunting, farming, technological development and culture, and warfare have had an impact on the biosphere. In the beginning, when humanity lived as hunters and gatherers, man's effect on the biosphere was limited; but with increasing numbers of people and technological development, man-made changes are becoming evident on a massive scale.

Now the number of people on earth has increased a thousand-fold compared to what it was when farming began, around 12,000 years ago. The intensity of resource and energy use and waste production is an even greater load on the biosphere.

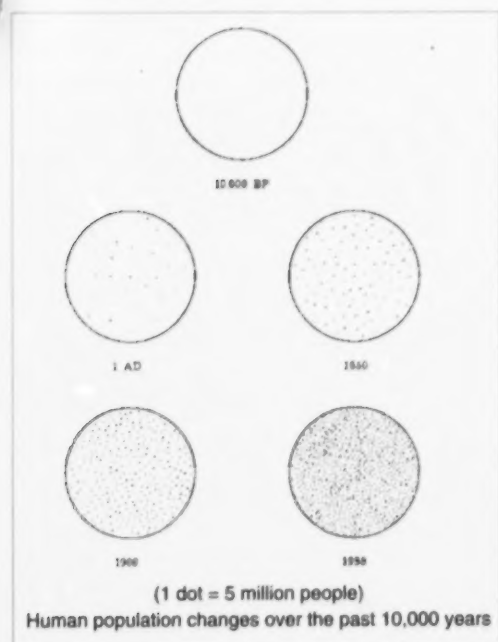
For the first time since the emergence of life on Earth, one species of animal is capable of causing irreversible changes in the biosphere.

Boyden, of the Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies at the Australian National University, defines biohistory as the study of the biological background to human situations and of the interplay in history and at the present time between cultural and natural processes.

Analyzing the various forms of interaction between man and nature, Boyden concludes that overcoming the environ-

mental problems facing humanity requires a shift in cultural systems and in programmes of formal and community education. To achieve a better understanding of the relations between human society and the biosphere, Boyden argues for wider teaching of these concepts. Among other things he underlines that ecological realities and not economic factors will determine whether the human species is still in existence on this planet at the end of the coming century. His book, *Biohistory: the Interplay Between Human Society and the Biosphere*, is intended for everybody interested (researchers, teachers and students) in the relations between man and nature, the role of culture and the sustainability of ecological systems.

Biohistory: the Interplay Between Human Society and the Biosphere, by Stephen Boyden, is published by UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme, in co-operation with Parthenon Books. It may be obtained through national distributors of UNESCO publications, or directly by mail from the UNESCO Press, Sales Division, 7 Place Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, FRANCE. The price, 380 FF, includes postage by surface mail.



Objectives of the World Decade

The Decade has four main goals:

1. Acknowledging the cultural dimension of development
2. Affirming and enriching cultural identities
3. Broadening participation in cultural life
4. Promoting international cultural co-operation

The central idea behind the Decade is to place culture at the very heart of development.

World Decade Themes

The annual themes for the second half of the World Decade for Cultural Development are:

- 1993 Culture, Education and Work
- 1994 Culture and Development
- 1995 Culture and Agriculture
- 1996 Culture and Health
- 1997 Culture and Technology: Arts, Science and Communication.

The World Day for Cultural Development, held on 21 May each year, can focus on these annual themes or on the overall Decade theme, which is 'The Cultural Dimension of Development'.

Intergovernmental Committee for the World Decade

President:

Professor Luis Bernardo Honwana (Mozambique)

Rapporteur:

Ambassador Gonzalo Figueroa Yáñez (Chile)

Vice-Presidents:

Eugen Simion (Rumania)

Bashkar Ghose (India)

Ursula Rellstab (Switzerland)

Abdel Mazi El Tazi (Morocco)

World Decade Secretariat

Co-ordinator: Anders Arfwedson

Secretary of Intergovernmental

Committee: Basile Kossou

Chief of Promotion: Birgitta Leander

Front cover

Experimental agricultural project: potato picking in Richard Toll (Senegal). Photo: UNESCO/D. Roger

Back cover

Vestiges of ancient Palmyra, once a cross-cultural metropolis, in today's Syrian Arab Republic. Photo: UNESCO/Dan Dubert



